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SUMMER SQUASH IN GARDENS. Although squash is not usually recommended for small gardens, many gardeners like to grow their own. A few hills of the bush varieties of summer squash will provide a generous supply for the average family, Victory Garden Headquarters at the U. S. Department of Agriculture suggests. Summer squash is ordinarily planted in "hills" of about four plants each, spaced $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 feet each way.

Summer squash benefits particularly from a moderate but constant and never failing supply of moisture. Tomatoes and cucumbers are two other garden crops with this same need. To insure a reliable moisture supply for these crops it will pay to prepare special planting holes. Dig a hole roughly the size of a half-bushel basket and fill it half to two-thirds full of compost or other organic material, and mix this thoroughly with the soil as it is returned to the hole. For squash or cucumbers, well rotted manure is first choice as organic matter, but manure is not recommended in planting holes for tomatoes. The soil should be warm when squash or cucumber seeds are planted.

Keep young squash and young cucumbers dusted with cryolite or rotenone to control the squash borer and striped cucumber beetle. Protection of squash from borer damage depends upon early and regular treatments. Begin when the first blossoms form and continue weekly through the season. The striped beetle attacks the plants as they come through the ground. Make the treatment before you see the beetle. Otherwise it may be too late.

If possible, keep squash and cucumbers watered in dry periods. If it is impossible to water these crops, a mulch will help prevent loss of moisture from the soil. Planting holes filled with compost also help to hold moisture in the soil during dry spells.

MULCHES FOR VICTORY GARDENS. A mulch does not put water into the soil of a garden. It only helps to hold for use by crop plants the moisture that is already there or that is added later as rain or irrigation water. This, says Victory Garden Headquarters at the U. S. Department of Agriculture, is a point many inexperienced gardeners have been overlooking--and too many experienced gardeners as well. They do not mulch soon enough, but wait until drought threatens the crop.

The time to mulch a planting of vegetables is as soon as the crops have made growth enough so that they will not be smothered by the mulching material. If the ground is well supplied with moisture so much the better. If it is dry already, the mulch will not cause it to dry faster but will help catch water if rain comes and will make watering more effective. An important point to bear in mind is this: If mulch is very deep, only a good rain or a thorough watering with the hose will get moisture through to the soil. Before the surface is covered with mulch, the row should be thoroughly weeded, either by hoeing, or pulling or both.

It is never too early in the season to locate and get control of good mulching material. Some forehanded gardeners rake up and save dried leaves in the fall to use as mulch the following summer. Others go to the woods in spring or early summer and bring home "pine straw" or pine needles. Others dry and pile grass clippings. Grass clippings piled fresh develop a foul odor of decay. Coarse and reedy grass can sometimes be cut on vacant lots, and if seed has not formed it makes a good mulch. If straw is available and not too expensive, it is a satisfactory mulching material. Granulated peat is likely to be too expensive for mulching anything larger than small flower beds or nursery rows.

Mulching such crops as cantaloups and tomatoes keeps the fruit off the ground and helps control rots.

Any organic material that forms a covering mat, cuts the direct heat of sunlight and checks wind movement along the soil surface, acts as a mulch and moisture conserver.

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